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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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NO.

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : USCINCSO FOR POLAD, DOD, Amembassies SAN SALVADOR,
MANAGUA, TEGUCIGALPA

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : INTERNAL SECURITY REPORT: September 21-27, 1968

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REF :
REVIEWED BY Calj DATE OCT 1968

PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

Ambassador's Assassination

1. No reports of progress on apprehending the alleged assassins of Ambassador Mein have been made public during the past week. The sister of Michelle Jeanette FIRK Burgos arrived from France for a four-day stay in Guatemala. She had the body exhumed and identified it as Firk. The remains were reburied. (See A-591 of September 21, 1968)

2. On the evening of September 26 the government announced the promulgation of Decree 634 extending the State of Siege for thirty days from September 27. The Decree noted that the conditions requiring this measure a month ago still persisted. COMMENT: As previously noted, the President apparently intends to extend the State of Siege until the assassins are captured.

Other Violence

3. Fire destroyed two warehouses at the Customs Depot in downtown Guatemala on the evening of September 23. Initial reports quoted Customs Guards as stating that they heard an explosion just before one warehouse, filled with inflammables, burst into flames. The blaze spread quickly through the second as a shortage of water hampered firemen's efforts. Damage has been estimated at between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.* This is the second major fire at the Customs Yard this year. COMMENT: Although security forces after several days of fruitless investigation now speculate privately that a short circuit may have caused the fire, some guess that subversive elements desiring to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Guatemalan Communist

* These are preliminary, unofficial estimates and subject to correction.

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Party (September 28) might have sparked the blaze

[REDACTED]

4. Otherwise, reported incidents of violence stayed at a low level for the second consecutive week.

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